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RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1255
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 1149
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 3516
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 3896
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 8408
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS LA PAZ 000180

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR WHA/AND DHENIFIN AND LPETRONI
STATE ALSO FOR INR/IAA KSMITH ARMITAGE
TREASURY FOR SGOOCH
ENERGY FOR CDAY AND SLADISLAW
NSC FOR DFISK
USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [TBIO](#) [BL](#)
SUBJECT: GOB NAMES LEFTIST CABINET

11. (SBU) Summary: President Morales announced the 16 members of his cabinet January 23, the majority leftist, indigenous and from the altiplano. Morales exhorted the new cabinet to change Bolivia, integrate marginalized members of society, eliminate corruption, and serve -- not exploit -- the people.

He created two new ministries, Justice and Water, and eliminated the Ministries of Indigenous Affairs and of Popular Participation. The Ministry of Campesino Affairs and Agriculture has been revamped as the Ministry of Rural Development and Agriculture, and the Ministry of Sustainable Development appears to be evolving into a planning ministry, which may supervise the Ministries of Finance and Economic Development. Following are the names, positions, and brief biographies of each cabinet member, including four women and several affiliates of the left-leaning La Paz university, Universidad Mayor de San Andres (UMSA). End summary.

12. (SBU) - Minister of Foreign Relations, David Choquehuanca Céspedes (DOB 5/7/61): Indigenous leader with Marxist and nationalist tendencies who was a founder of the MAS party and has served as Evo Morales' personal adviser on political and indigenous affairs. He has also run key European NGOs in Bolivia, including NINA, that have focused on training indigenous leaders. He holds a degree in indigenous law from the Cordillera University in Bolivia, and may have been educated in Russia. He supports small farm production and coca growers. It is rumored that he has served as the treasurer for MAS for many years. After his appointment as Minister, he delivered an address, partially in Aymara, agreeing with Morales to change Bolivia's neo-liberal economic model. Choquehuanca is from La Paz; he is married with two children.

- (SBU) Minister of the Presidency, Juan Ramon Quintana Tabora: Quintana has served as a Major in the Bolivian army and as a political analyst for the Defense Ministry, holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and a Master's Degree in Philosophy and Political Science from UMSA, and has undergone

infantry training in Fort Benning, Georgia. Quintana was born in 1959 in Cochabamba. He speaks some English and some Quechua. A MAS convert in 2004, he has stated to the press that it is essential to stop U.S. payments to Bolivian soldiers to eliminate U.S. interference in the Bolivian police and military. Quintana was part of Morales' political transition team, and is reputed to be anti-American.

- (SBU) Minister of Government, Alicia Munoz (DOB 9/12/51): Formerly a MAS senator from Oruro, she is the first woman to serve as Minister of Government. An anthropologist with strong interests in human rights, she played a crucial role in Embassy efforts to get a Trafficking in Persons Law passed in the waning days of the last Congress and has done much to promote women's rights and improve working conditions in the agricultural sector.

- (SBU) Minister of Education, Felix Patzi Paco (DOB 2/21/67): A sociologist by training, Patzi was formerly the Director of the Social Research Institute of UMSA and is a good friend of VP Alvaro Garcia Linera. In his books, he proclaims the end of neo-liberalism and affirms that the indigenous movement is the driver of the new hegemony in Bolivia. Patzi, an ethnic Aymara, hails from La Paz department. During his speech to the new ministers, Morales encouraged Patzi to contact Cuban experts to discuss Cuba's plans to help Bolivia eradicate illiteracy.

- (SBU) Minister of Hydrocarbons, Andres Soliz Rada (age 66): Attorney and radical journalist who founded CONDEPA, a leftist political party, who dedicated much of his writing to analyzing natural resource issues and criticizing privatization and neo-liberalism. Supports nationalization of gas and has stated that the hydrocarbons companies are

stealing from Bolivia. Former congressman (elected in 1989 and again in 1997); former senator (elected 1993). Hydrocarbons representatives previously stated that if he became hydrocarbons minister, it would be a disaster for the industry. Following his appointment, Soliz stated that his first task would be to be sure that multinational petroleum companies are not claiming Bolivia's gas reserves as their own. He said the reserves, worth US\$ 120 billion, would enable the country to take steps towards industrialization. He is known for being "aggressive" and "explosive."

- (SBU) Minister of Finance, Luis Alberto Arce Catacora (DOB 9/28/63): An economist by training, Arce holds a masters degree from the University of California (UCLA) and another, also in economics, from Warwick University in the United Kingdom. A native La Paz resident, he has worked as a professor at UMSA. He also worked for eighteen years at the Central Bank as sub-director for international reserves. He may be expected to report to Minister Villegas, with whom he is said to have a close relationship (see below).

- (SBU) Minister of Sustainable Development/Planning, Carlos Villegas Quiroga (age 56): Economic analyst and professor of development sciences at UMSA, Villegas was in charge of the MAS' Economic Transition Commission and accompanied Morales on his pre-inauguration world tour. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from UMSA, a Master's Degree in Economics from the Center of Research and Economics Teaching (CIDES) in Mexico, and a Doctorate in Development Sciences from the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana in Mexico. He is from Potosi, and does not have any public sector experience.

- (SBU) Minister of Economic Development, Celinda Sosa Luna: Hailing from Tarija, Sosa served as head of the MAS' Social Transition Commission. She has spent most of her professional life as a labor leader, and is a representative of the Women's Documentation Center. After her appointment as Minister, she stated that Bolivia must negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. under conditions of equality that ensure balanced and just development. She is also expected to focus on support for microenterprise. Sosa is married with three children.

- (SBU) Minister of Public Works, Salvador Ric Riera (age 56): Businessman from Santa Cruz who supported the MAS during the elections. He holds a Ph.D. in diplomacy, and is the owner of an automobile importing company, a supermarket chain, and several other Santa Cruz businesses.

- (SBU) Minister of Rural Development and Agriculture, Hugo Salvatierra Gutierrez: Santa Cruz lawyer and labor advisor who holds a degree from UMSA. As the MAS candidate for governor ("prefecto") of Santa Cruz, he placed third on December 18.

- (SBU) Minister of Justice, Casimira Rodriguez: Rodriguez served as Director of the Latin American Federation of Domestic Employees and won the 2003 World Methodist Peace Award for her activism in promoting the 2003 Domestic Workers Law. She began working as a domestic servant at age 13 under difficult conditions, which led her to be an activist for domestic workers' rights.

- (SBU) Minister of Water, Abel Mamani Marca (age 40): Leader of FEJUVE, the El Alto neighborhood federation, which helped topple two Bolivian presidents during protests in June 2005 and October 2003. He studied dentistry but never completed a degree. As Minister, he has promised water service throughout the country and to resolve the Aguas de Illimani water dispute in El Alto. Mamani is married with three children.

- (SBU) Minister of Health, Nila Heredia Miranda: Former La Paz Department Director of Health, Vice President of UMSA, President of the Medical School at UMSA, and member of the Communist Party. Ms. Heredia is from Potosi, and is a surgeon. Ms. Heredia was exiled to France in 1976.

- (SBU) Minister of Defense, Walker San Miguel Rodriguez: Formerly President of the La Paz Lawyer's Union, as well as a practicing lawyer specializing in commercial and constitutional law. He previously worked for a Bolivian airline (LAB) as an executive. Rodriguez is viewed as a leftist opportunist and not necessarily a MAS true believer.

- (SBU) Minister of Mining, Walter Villaroel (age 47): Leader of mining cooperatives. Villaroel is from Potosi, and is married with four children.

- (SBU) Minister of Labor, Santiago Galvez Mamani (DOB 12/15/58): From La Paz, Galvez studied industrial chemistry and business administration, but never obtained a degree. He has 27 years of experience working in Bolivian factories, where he held a variety of positions. He is married with three children.

- (SBU) YPFB (Yacimientos Petroliferos Fiscales Bolivianos, the state oil company), Jorge Alvarado: MAS candidate for governor ("prefecto") in Cochabamba, who placed second. Has worked as a consultant for the World Bank. Reportedly, Alvarado has links to Venezuela and wants to strengthen Bolivia and Venezuela's hydrocarbons relationship.

13. (SBU) Comment: Morales' cabinet is more representative of Bolivian society than his congressional candidate lists were, as it includes women and persons of indigenous origin. It is heavily balanced in favor of the western highlands (altiplano) in terms of geographic representation, with a few key ministers from the eastern part of the country named to placate Santa Cruz and the business sector. It is no surprise that the cabinet leans hard to the left, and that approximately two-thirds have no prior government experience.

End comment.

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